

# International Journal of Multidisciplinary Trends

E-ISSN: 2709-9369

P-ISSN: 2709-9350

[www.multisubjectjournal.com](http://www.multisubjectjournal.com)

IJMT 2022; 4(1): 153-156

Received: 16-01-2022

Accepted: 09-03-2022

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## Linguistic contact: Lexical borrowings

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### Abstract

This paper intends to find out the contact-induced changes in Kohistani language variety spoken in Ganderbal District of Kashmir Valley. In Kashmir valley, Ganderbal Kohistani co-exists with other languages like Kashmiri, Urdu and Gojri. Urdu is used as “Lingua Franca” for interaction with other linguistic communities present in District Ganderbal. Apart from this, Urdu is the state official language and is also used as a medium of communication in schools, colleges and other educational institutions. Kohistani speakers are multilinguals having competence in Kashmiri, Urdu as well as Gojri. Thus, the study of Ganderbal Kohistani speech community will develop a new understanding of lexical borrowings/adoptions that take place because of language contact.

**Data and Methodology:** The present paper is based on the sociolinguistic framework utilized by William Labov (1963, 1972, 1984), Wolfram and Fasold (1974), Trudgill (1974), Milroy (1980, 1987), Satyanath (1991), Eckert (2000), Satyanath and Laskar (2008, 2009), Laskar (2003, 2012) and khushboo (2018, 2021). The data for this study has been derived from the Kohistani speakers of two villages of District Ganderbal. Speech of Kohistani speakers were recorded in natural settings. These speakers belong to different age groups ranging from 10-80 years. “Sociolinguistic Interviews” and “Participant Observations” were the main source of data.

**Keywords:** Ganderbal kohistani, Dardic, lexical borrowing, code-mixing and code-switching

### 1. Introduction

Generally, contact-induced changes are of two types: (1) Direct transport of linguistic items or forms, which includes lexical borrowings or lexical adoptions. (2) Structural convergence, also known as pattern transfer, which involves the rearrangement of the patterns of inherited items by the process of diffusion through interference. In this paper, we will examine lexical borrowings in Kohistani spoken in Ganderbal District of Kashmir valley. We will also take into consideration the contact -induced changes in Ganderbal Kohistani. Some cases of code-mixing or single-word switching will also be highlighted. Code -switching will not be taken into consideration because it involves the alternate use of another language. The main aim of this study is to examine, what features of borrowing and convergence are particular to the community under study and which aspects are of greater interest of universal theories of language contact.

#### 1.1 Lexical borrowings in Ganderbal Kohistani: An Overview

Borrowings (or adoptions) of linguistic items from one language to another is the most frequent type of cross-linguistic influence in natural languages. Here “borrowing” is used in its conventional sense and not in its literal sense. A better term for borrowing is “lexical adoptions”.

According to Hasselmo (1969), Mackey (1970) <sup>[29]</sup>, Poplack and Sankoff (1984) <sup>[34]</sup>, lexical borrowing involves the incorporation of the individual L2 words (or compounds functioning as single words) into discourse of L1, the host or recipient language, usually phonologically and morphologically adapted to conform to patterns of that language. The status of ‘lone word’, however is traditionally have conferred only on words, which are widely used in the speech community, and have achieved a certain level of recognition or acceptance.

The borrowing process, of course is different in some respects from monolingual lexical change. For example, the phonological shape and the morphological composition of borrowed words are not, at least initially, likely to coincide exactly with host language patterns. The agents of introduction and, to some extent, transmission of borrowings within the community are more likely to be bilinguals or those indirect contact with the donor language and / or culture, whereas the innovation and propagation of other lexical novelties may, to a greater extent, be due to other subgroups within the community, such as the intellectual establishment (source: Bourdieu and Boltanski, 1975), schools, the media, minorities imbued of some measure of cultural prestige, the youth subculture or the world of

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science and technology. Note, however, that the latter two groups are often precisely those with most contact with the other language, especially if it is English, and hence could very well be those primarily responsible for borrowing and transmission of lone words (Source: S. Poplac, D. Sankoff, C. Miller, 1987) [34].

In case of Ganderbal Kohistani we find code-mixing or we can say single-word switching. The occurrences of single-word switching or code-mixing between Ganderbal Kohistani and Urdu/Kashmiri in (1) below are instances of lexical borrowings in the present study.

### 1.1.1 Single-word (phrase) switching in Ganderbal Kohistani from Urdu and Kashmiri

(a) /mah k<sup>h</sup>ura:k k<sup>h</sup>am t<sup>h</sup>u:/t<sup>h</sup>i:/

i-nom food eat-pr aux

I eat food

(b) /sē: tas tʃa:ku: gin ma:ratʃ/

She-erg him-acc knife- inst kill-pst

She killed him with a knife

(c) /mē: tasē: kalam di:tʃ/

i-erg him-dat pen give-pst

I gave him a pen

(d) /mē: b<sup>h</sup>a:bi pasand t<sup>h</sup>u:/t<sup>h</sup>i:/

i-dat apple-pl like aux

I like apples

(e) /tama:m duniya mī: mut<sup>h</sup> ma: t<sup>h</sup>u:/

entire world my hands-loc aux

The entire world is in my hands

(f) /mah but ai izat karam t<sup>h</sup>u:/t<sup>h</sup>i:/

i-nom every-gen respect do-pr aux

I respect everyone

(g) /va:da karlar ni ʃa:rah/

promise never neg break

Never break a promise

(h) /mah nokri: karam tʃa:ham t<sup>h</sup>u:/t<sup>h</sup>i:/

i-nom job do-pr want-pr aux

I want to do a job

(i) /sē: mē: duk<sup>h</sup> di:tʃ/

She-erg me-dat hurt give-pst

She hurted me

(j) /ba:g mā: ka:p<sup>h</sup>i: k<sup>h</sup>alak t<sup>h</sup>o:/

garden-loc many people aux

There are many people in the garden

Under the name of Kohistani are included several Dard dialects or language spoken in the Panjkora, Swat, and Kohistans. They are all closely connected together and have numerous dialects, almost every little side-valley possessing its peculiar 'jib'. The linguistic boundary between Kohistani dialects spoken in Pakistan and Pashto is very ill defined, for all over Kohistani of the three rivers the inhabitants are bilinguals and speak Pashto in addition to the dialect peculiar to each tract. All are much mixed, not only with

that language but also with the Indian language immediately to the south (source: Grierson, 1919) [13].

According to Grierson's Linguistic Survey of India, (1919) [13] the language spoken in entire northern region is "Dardic". Dardic, as a separate branch of Indo- Iranian, comprises three groups:

1. The Kafir group,
2. The Khowar group and
3. The Dard group (includes Shina, Kashmiri, and Kohistani).

Shina, locally pronounced /ʃiŋāā/, is the language of the people scattered over a vast mountainous region stretching from northern areas of Jammu and Kashmir in India to the areas in Gilgit-Baltistan and the Kohistan province of Pakistan. Shina speaking areas under the administration of Pakistan include Gilgit, lower Hunza, Tangir-Darel, Astro and the Chillas Valley, as well as certain areas in Indus Kohistan. In the northern state of J&K in India, Shina is spoken in the Gurez valley of Bandipora, a district of the Kashmir division and in the Drass area of Kargil, a district of the Ladakh division. The variety of Shina spoken in Gurez is also known as Gurezi-Shina and the one spoken in Drass is called Drassi-Shina (source: Musavir, 2016) [33]. Bashir (2003) [4] has proposed a detailed classification of the Dardic languages. She has classified the Dardic into the following six groups: Pashai, Kunar, Chitral, Kohistani, Kashmiri, and Shina.

Kohistani as a whole is heavily influenced from Pashto, Shina, Urdu, Gojri, Balti and Pahari. The vocabulary of Kohistani shows an intense and longstanding contact with Indo-Aryan languages, especially with Dardic group such as Shina and Khowar. Kohistani spoken in Pakistan has also borrowed immensely from Pashto an Indo- Iranian language. Kohistani also shows some traces of influences from Balti a Tibeto- burman language and Pahari an Indo- Aryan language. But Ganderbal Kohistani spoken in Kashmir Valley is heavily influenced by Indo-Aryan family of languages, especially Urdu, Gojri, and Kashmiri.

Among all these languages, urdu has a special status. Urdu has become lingua franca of the region, in the present days. In 1980's when the old Silk Route was opened, they got opportunities for travel and migration. An important thing to note is that the two Kohistani languages one spoken in Jammu and Kashmir and the another spoken in Pakistan have been influenced by contact with Urdu and other languages independently. The Ganderbal Kohistani spoken in kashmir valley, which have been separated politically as well as geographically from the main dialects of kohistani, has been in contact with Indo-Aryan languages like Urdu, Gojri and Kashmiri. As a result a lot of changes have taken place in different dialects of Kohistani spoken in Pakistan because of isolation and contact with other ethno-linguistic populations. No documentation has been carried out on these contact situations of Kohistani variety spoken in Jammu and Kashmir.

The variety of Kohistani (Ganderbal Kohistani) in J&K is very interesting both from linguistic as well as socio-linguistic perspective, because it has been in isolation from its main dialects of Kohistani for about 115 years. Thus Ganderbal Kohistani has developed divergent features which separates it systematically from the varieties spoken in Pakistan. These divergent features present in Ganderbal Kohistani of J&K, can be partially explained in terms of

contact. Apart from this, the fact is that number of speakers of Ganderbal Kohistani is small, it may be threatened by socio-economic pressures which could lead language shift. Therefore, it is necessary to describe and document the changes it has undergone or is currently going through.

### Conclusion

The lexical borrowings have been intergated into the vocabulary of Ganderbal Kohistani to varying degrees. Urdu a prestige language and also a medium to communicate with other people becomes the main source of lexical borrowings in Pakistan as well as in Kashmir valley. In Ganderbal kohistani of Kashmir Valley the most commonly and widely borrowed vocabulary items are nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs and conjunctives. These vocabulary items are typically borrowed from the high prestige language Urdu.

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